



DIGITAL GOVERNMENT

COVID-19 Business Facilitation



UNCTAD

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COVID-19

How the UN's digital government platform has helped governments, entrepreneurs and vulnerable populations during Covid

Faced with a global pandemic, countries have been using UNCTAD's online digital government platform, known as eRegistrations, to continue providing essential services to SMEs while their offices have been closed.

BENIN

Number of
companies
created online
tripled
during Covid

EL SALVADOR

56%
of entrepreneurs
accessing Covid
support online are
women

RWANDA

Platform published
information to make it
easier to
import medical
equipment



Discover services governments can provide with UNCTAD's digital platform



IMPLEMENTATION OF COVID-19 FISCAL RESCUE MEASURES

- Processing of Covid business grant requests
- Social security administration for temporarily retrenched workers
- Post-crisis recovery of state aid through tax systems



PROCESSING TRADE OPERATIONS

- Company registrations
- Transferring property title
- Issuing business and trade licenses



These services have enabled entrepreneurs to obtain the licenses they need to continue conducting business and paying taxes, assisted SMEs to access Covid-19 rescue packages thereby protecting jobs and livelihoods, and enabled those who have lost their jobs to access social security or set up their own business.

processes can be sped up to prevent disruption to business, and procedures can be simplified

Created by UNCTAD's Division on Investment and Enterprise, eRegistrations allows local and national governments to simplify their administrative procedures and make them accessible through online single windows, thereby avoiding physical visits to administration offices.

Digitalization of administration has other advantages too. By integrating card and mobile payments as well as chatbots and voice communications, users no longer have to travel sometimes long distances from rural areas to queue at crowded offices, processes can be sped up to prevent disruption to business, and procedures can be simplified so as to be understood by those not familiar with government bureaucracy, thereby eliminating expensive intermediaries.

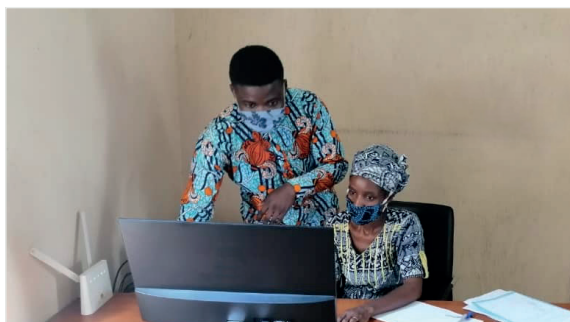
Increasing the number of SMEs formalizing their operations also generates greater fiscal revenues and social security contributions, thereby helping governments and communities to be more resilient during the crisis.

UNCTAD staff worked remotely with governments during the crisis to develop new online services using the platform. Simple online services were created within two days, with more complex services (involving multiple governments offices) up and running within a week.

Vulnerable populations in particular have benefited from the online single windows created by eRegistrations in their country, even while the pandemic has disrupted their livelihoods:

BENIN

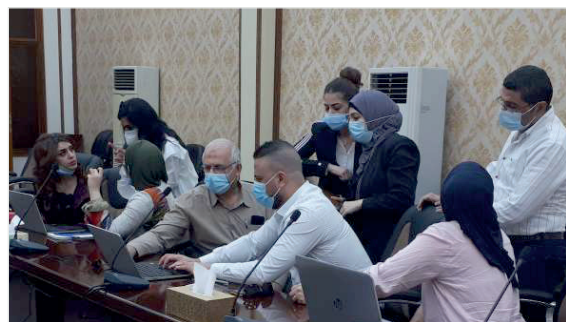
monentreprise.bj



In **Benin**, 48 percent of those setting up a business on eRegistrations, marketed in the country as monentreprise.bj, are 30 or under, one third are women and over 50 percent are based outside the capital. Use of the platform has more than tripled as Covid has taken hold. The process now takes only two hours to complete.

IRAQ

business.mot.gov.iq



In **Iraq**, where entrepreneurs need to limit visits to administrative offices because of the twin challenges of the pandemic and violence, government officials worked to put in place the newly-launched business.mot.gov.iq online business registry. The authorities are specifically targeting its use at those affected by the current crisis.

EL SALVADOR

cuentamype.org



In **El Salvador**, 56 percent of entrepreneurs using the Cuenta MYPE platform to access a \$600 million Covid rescue package were female, and numbers increased two and a half times between June and July this year.

GUATEMALA**registromercantil.gob.gt**

In **Guatemala**, online company registrations through registromercantil.gob.gt increased more than two and a half times as Covid took hold. Economy Minister, Antonio Malouf told the media that “reducing paperwork in government agencies is one of the actions we are taking as part of the Covid economic recovery strategy.”

RWANDA**rwandatrade.rw**

In **Rwanda**, the rwandatrade.rw trade portal was reconfigured to help traders who need the necessary licenses to import pharmaceutical and medical equipment into the landlocked country.

UNCTAD EREGISTRATIONS

eRegistrations is an e-government system, designed to computerize simple or complex administrative procedures. It can be easily adapted and configured to any administrative process. It was developed by UNCTAD's Division on Investment and Enterprise.

eRegistrations is suited both to operations involving only one administration (such as registering at the business registry) and to simultaneous operations at multiple administrations (such as registering a company at the tax office, with the municipal council, with social security, at the labour department and at the business registry).

It acts as a single electronic window and can be installed at the municipal, national or supra-national levels.

Being online, processes can be made faster and more efficient, improving productivity and quality of delivery.

The system integrates payment systems including mobile money, card payments, bank transfers, and electronic certificates. It also integrates communications tools to allow online chat and voice communications between users and government agencies, and among agencies.

www.eregistrations.org

